

June 20, 1966

~~SECRET~~

Belgium

1. Early March 1966 a Mrs KOLODIY, fnu of Mykolayiv, obl. Lvov, Ukr SSR, arrived to Limburg on a visit to her son, a local activist of the SUM (Union of Ukrainian Youth). She stayed for 3 months and then returned to Ukraine. She is a ^{typical} small town woman, aged approx. 60-63, primary education, of average intelligence.

When talking to various people Source used to praise moderately present conditions in the Ukraine claiming among other things that for many people life got much better at the present than it was under Poles. She discarded also any serious threat from Russification to Ukrainian nation and thought emigres were absolutely exaggerating its scale and influence. When countered with some factual examples in this field such as , for instance, prevalence of Russian language in Ukrainian cities, Source used to reply that this was due to a great influx of Russian element but Ukrainians did not lose their national identity because of that. Besides, some Ukrainians who often in public places were speaking Russians , were probably those, who by doing so , wanted to become inconspicuous to the regime for one reason and another and in her opinion they were right. " It is easy to fight for Ukraine abroad by publicly shouting ^{at} and attacking everyone speaking Russian in Kiev or Lvov but things looked much more difficult on the spot" - was her comment. She suggested that some of those "rampaging emigre patriots" should go to Ukraine and try out their courage there.

Summary

"Confidentially" Source disclosed that in reality the life in the Soviet Union was still rather drab and poor in spite of some improvements after Stalin's death and recently after Khrushchev's removal. Last months before Brezhnev's and Kosygin's takeover were particularly hard because there was very little, and of a very low quality, bread , and of other foodstuffs particularly of meat and butter. Shortly after Khrushchev's removal the food supply remarkably improved and people were quite angry at Khrushchev for having kept all that in stores and having let population starve."

~~SECRET~~

In addition, people did not like Khrushchev not only because of acute food shortages and unfulfilled promises but also for other reasons. They did not like his aid to Cubans, Africans, and Asians and identified their own misery with Khrushchev's adventurous preoccupation with all kind of "blacks and yellows". But mainly they felt new political strictures. At about same time as living standard was steeply getting down there was an increase of KGB and Militia summons for interrogations and warnings, particularly to those people who had some "sins" in the past. Source was told by young people in Lvov that also they were subjected to a greater pressure to stop their "silly jokes" and complaining against authorities. By "silly jokes" she meant "talking against Russians and those with them". According to Source some students in Lvov were threatened to be thrown out of the University or even out of the city altogether if they won't stop "their activities". Similarly, at plants and factories, some people were called by nachalstvo and warned not to start "any trouble".

The arson of the National Library in Kiev was thought by most people as a portent of forthcoming new wave of persecution and terror of Ukrainian intelligentsia. Fortunately, it did not come that far.

After Khrushchev's removal life improved substantially but not in political aspect. According to Source "Brezhnev and Kosygin did not change much what Khrushchev left" in his policy against Ukrainians. The arrests of 1965 were considered by some people as just a delayed action of Khrushchev implemented by the new leadership. Source could not state any names of the arrested and described them usually as "intelligents". She was, however, quite optimistic as to future of Ukrainians pointing out at an increased opposition of young people against the regime.

According to Source people expected some serious changes from the 23rd Congress, first of all, almost all believed that one of the big vozd1 would have to step down. There was also some apprehension as to whether not an eventual new "turmoil or change" on the top will not cause new strictures for population. On this occasion Source explained that there was some sort of "different thinking" between younger and older people. The latter would prefer to have the life finally stabilized

and undisturbed by any new upheavals from which they are rather inclined to expect only new trouble. After WW II, still even in late 50', many people waited for war and saw their salvation in it. Today, they simply gave up and just continued to complain against the US and the West for their "having done nothing". It is, however, quite different with young people, particularly those who "go to school" in town. They would like to see the present situation changed and are not afraid to criticize authorities. The only trouble is that many of them are mainly concerned with their own welfare only. Anyway, now they (youth) usually anticipate something new and better from occurring "turmoils and upheavals" on the top whereas the elder generation - ~~not~~ ^{rather} the opposite. The latter simply did not believe ~~that~~ the system could become anything better than tolerable and could not be ~~changed by~~ ^{changed by} means than war or revolution and they stopped believing in either. In other words new changes must not be to ^{the} better and Source herself was also of the same opinion. She personally would not mind if the present improvements would continue and Ukrainians would be given more rights what she hoped will come sooner or later anyway. "Finally, you can't break a wall by hitting it with your head".

According to Source people have very little interest in party bosses in Lvov or other nearby cities and still less in those in Kiev or Moscow. PODGORNYY, SEREBET and other Ukrainians are not being differentiated from other Soviet leaders, or for that matter, Russians. According to Source no one she knew in Mykolayiv or Lvov paid any attention to the fact that Podgorny was Ukrainian, that is - as she put it - if he really was.

2. BOIKO Maria Dmytrovykh , aged 40, Ukrainian, sister of B. of Brussels; residing at PEREMOZHETS , No 8, r-n AKIMOVKA, obl. ZAPOROZHE, Ukr SSR , employed with a fruit conservation factory , was refused early 1966 a permit to visit her brother in Belgium because-as it was explained to her by authorities, her two other brothers ^{in Ukraine} and the one in Belgium served with SS Division and supported at one time bourgeois nationalists.

3. KUCHERENKO Vasil Ivanovich of 19 ul. Nevskoho , MARGANETS, obl. DNIPROPETROVSK, Ukrainian, aged approx. 38-40, party member, employed with Gas works of Marganets as a foreman or some sort of lower manager, visited in May 1966 his sister SHEVCHUK (Shevtosk) Alina of 19 Rue de Fort, Brussels 6. He was approached by B., treated by him with a dinner at his house, given emigre literature and discussed various problems. All attempts of B. remained unsuccessful, K. turned out to be a rather limited type, a convinced party-man , impervious to B's arguments. K. stuck all the time to his phrases about everything better in the Soviet Union / ^{than in the West} and did not go beyond it.

4. Beside Ukrainian women married to Belgians , this summer also more people from West Ukrainian old emigration, are going to visit Ukraine. Some of them have already received visa. Thus, SYDOR Mykola Ivanovich , born 1908, of 105 Rue Puccignies, Brussels 7, is leaving together with his Belgian wife Anne Marie Medeleine nee Dhont (born 1908) for Ukraine by car on 1 Jul 1966 and plans to stay there for a month or so. He was given his visa to visit his sister in Lvov , Ukraine (her name: YATSKIV Olga Ivanovna of wul. Karpinskoho # 5/7. Also some old emigres from Carpatho-Ukraine who came to Belgium in early 1930's, are visiting Carpatho-Ukraine this year.